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Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament

Letter dated 2 July 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Turkmenistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith information on and the final document of the International Conference on Disarmament in Central Asia and the Caspian Basin, which was held under the aegis of the United Nations on 24 June 2010 in Ashgabat (see annexes I and II).

I would appreciate it if you could kindly circulate the present letter and its annexes as a document of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 95.

(*Signed*) Aksoltan **Atayeva**
Permanent Representative of Turkmenistan to the United Nations

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Annex I to the letter dated 2 July 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Turkmenistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

The international forum in Ashgabat laid the foundation for the elaboration of specific disarmament measures in the region

The further development of a compelling dialogue for the purpose of strengthening peace and stability in the region was the main item on the agenda of the International Conference on Disarmament in Central Asia and the Caspian Basin, held on 24 June in the capital of Turkmenistan. The initiative of convening this meeting was taken by the President of Turkmenistan, Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov, at the sixty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly held in New York in September 2009.

The Conference in Ashgabat, held under the aegis of the United Nations, was attended by 80 representatives of Central Asia and the Caspian Basin region and of major international and regional organizations — the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

In the opinion of the participants, this meeting was an important and timely event, reflecting the objective need to consolidate the efforts of States and international organizations to deal with disarmament issues of relevance to our region. The Conference was therefore highly focused and discussed practical measures for establishing a non-proliferation regime, arms control, reduction and elimination of individual types of weapon, and the drafting and application of international legal provisions to make this process consistent and irreversible.

It is appropriate here to state the position of Turkmenistan on this issue. It was natural for our country to have taken the initiative of convening this Conference. As a neutral State, Turkmenistan has always consistently advocated a reduction in the level and quantity of weapons in the region both as a basis for preserving strategic stability there and as a guarantee against the risks of outbreaks of armed conflict and uncontrolled and spontaneous use of weapons. In fact, our country was the first in the region to ratify the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, signed in Semipalatinsk, near which, as everyone knows, the largest nuclear test site in the world was formerly located. At the present time — from autumn last year to autumn this year — Turkmenistan is acting as the first coordinator of implementation of the conditions laid down in this Treaty.

As speakers stressed in their presentations, the adoption of this important collective decision was by no means accidental. Because the region is one of the most strategic zones of contemporary world politics, by virtue of the huge energy potential concentrated there and the important transport routes, it continues to be in direct proximity to hotbeds of instability and military conflicts. In addition, being fully aware of the realities of today's world, the States of Central Asia are pursuing a most responsible policy, making a weighty joint contribution to the cause of

strengthening regional and international security. It is thus unanimously felt that the signature and entry into force of the Semipalatinsk Treaty, the first multilateral agreement on security in the region, was one of the most important events of recent years in the global disarmament process.

This has been a momentous year for the disarmament process. The united position of the world leaders and their understanding of the importance of finding a rapid solution to the problem of global disarmament have led to the adoption of qualitatively new approaches to this issue, demonstrating the determination of the entire international community to coordinate efforts to deal with the threats and challenges of the day. In this connection, the Conference participants had high praise for the position of Turkmenistan. As a party to the most significant international legal instruments and primarily the United Nations conventions on disarmament, Turkmenistan is very actively participating in global processes to ensure stability and universal security.

The focus of Turkmenistan's approach to disarmament in the region is the creation there of a political platform for multilateral dialogue, namely a standing mechanism for collaborative political consultations, with an active role for the principal international organizations and above all for the United Nations.

At the plenary sessions of the International Conference, there was an extensive review and analysis of the situation regarding disarmament and the participation of the States of Central Asia and the Caspian Basin in the relevant agreements and a compelling discussion of the international law framework for disarmament and how it can be enhanced. Attention was paid to the role of international organizations in solving these issues at the global and regional levels and to the possibility of them providing assistance to the States of the region in such matters.

Stressing the need for careful study of the extensive experience in the area of disarmament accumulated by international and regional organizations, and primarily the United Nations, participants mentioned the special significance of the activities of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, which is today assigned an important role in creating an effective model for concerned cooperation and coordination of the disarmament process.

Noting the need for synchronized efforts and consolidation of common interests, participants emphasized that joint work and adoption of agreed and integrated approaches to security and disarmament issues will eventually be the most effective ways and means of solving pressing problems.

Referring to the timeliness of the broad dialogue initiated, participants were of the unanimous opinion that the Ashgabat meeting had created a solid platform for the elaboration of concrete measures and an ongoing exchange of views on issues of collective security and had thus promoted the strengthening of peace and stability in the region.

Expressing sincere appreciation to Turkmenistan for the well-organized meeting, participants emphasized that the productive and highly constructive dialogue had once again demonstrated the determination of the countries of the region and the international organizations working there to provide comprehensive assistance to the global disarmament process, including the reduction of arsenals of weapons of mass destruction.

In this sense, the Conference was actually the first professional consideration of the problems of the region from the disarmament viewpoint. Hence its political significance. In the opinion of Turkmenistan, the goal is to make this an ongoing and systemic process.

The following final document was adopted at the conclusion of the Conference.

Annex II to the letter dated 2 July 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Turkmenistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

International Conference on Disarmament in Central Asia and the Caspian Basin

Ashgabat, 24 June 2010

Final document

The International Conference on Disarmament in Central Asia and the Caspian Basin was held in Ashgabat on 24 June 2010, at the initiative of the President of Turkmenistan taken at the sixty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Participating in the Conference were delegations from the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan, as well as the High Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, the Secretary-General of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, the Head of the Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, the Chairman of the Executive Committee — Executive Secretary of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Deputy Secretary-General, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Turkmenistan, and representatives of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

The Conference participants heard a welcoming address from Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov.

The International Conference conducted a detailed review and analysis of the situation concerning disarmament affairs and the participation of Central Asian and Caspian Basin States in the relevant agreements and regimes, as well as a thought-provoking debate on the international legal framework for disarmament and how to improve it. Also analysed were the role and experience of international organizations in finding solutions to disarmament issues on a global and regional scale and the possibility of them assisting the efforts of the States in the region in that regard.

The Conference participants agreed without exception that ensuring security in the region is the prerogative of the Central Asian and Caspian Basin States themselves. Consolidating their efforts and developing, as appropriate, agreed and integrated approaches to matters of security and disarmament will produce the most effective solutions to pressing problems.

The Conference participants devoted considerable time to analysing progress made in implementing the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia,

as well as to discussing the prospects for further cooperation within the framework of the Treaty, including how to ensure that the nuclear Powers sign the Protocol on security assurances. Emphasis was placed on the need to broaden cooperation among parties to the Treaty under article 6, on the environmental rehabilitation of uranium tailings storage sites in Central Asia.

The Conference participants underlined the need for creative consideration of the experience accumulated by international organizations in the area of disarmament, and for States in the region to cooperate with the United Nations and the relevant international organizations, and to exploit the potential of the Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia.

Representatives of international organizations who spoke at the Conference welcomed the contribution made in the area of disarmament by the States in the region.

The broad exchange of views that took place demonstrated the desire of States in the region to find ways of reconciling the interests of the different countries in the area of disarmament.

The work of the Conference helped to strengthen peace and stability in the region, to continue the disarmament process and reinforce collective security and the role of the United Nations, as well as to enhance the effectiveness of regional mechanisms. It laid the groundwork for the organization of similar forums in the future based on consensus. The aim would be a joint consideration of problems concerning the security interests of all States in the region and exchange of information, when necessary, on initiatives and agreements on disarmament discussed and implemented in various formats, as well as on the development of framework principles, should the need for them arise. Such principles would provide a basis for further agreement on concrete measures in a narrower format.

In thanking Turkmenistan for its warm welcome, the Conference participants expressed their great appreciation of the host country's efforts in preparing and successfully holding the Conference.